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UNCLAS GENEVA 001606

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREF](#) [UNHCR](#)

SUBJECT: RECEIPT OF LETTER FROM UNHCR HIGH COMMISSIONER
ANTONIO GUTERRES ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE
CONDOLEZZA RICE

11. (U) Mission has received the following letter addressed to the Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Begin Text.

Madam,

As I take up my duties as High Commissioner, I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to thank you for your support for the work of UNHCR. It is an honour for me to serve these vulnerable people and the international community in this way, and I will do all I can to earn your continued support for the Office.

During the past month, I have had the opportunity to read a great deal and speak at length to UNHCR's senior managers, representative in the field, and to many others who know the organization well. This time has proved very instructive and has helped to shape my thinking as I begin work and survey the priorities of the next few months.

During the past few years, a great deal of work has been done by UNHCR to adapt itself and its activities to the changing external environment. My focus initially will be on the prioritization and implementation of these many well-founded initiatives. These relate to our fundamental responsibility to provide protection and to the perceived separation between protection and operations. They also include steps to ensure the transparency and accountability of the organization, which is crucial to our future. I believe also that increased consultation with all actors is necessary for UNHCR to meet the highest standards of performance in our operations worldwide.

In all these areas, your support and collaboration is essential. The success of our mission depends on you, both as donors and active defenders of the principles UNHCR is mandated to uphold.

Assuming office halfway through the year, I have both a good sense of our current financial situation for this year and the unenviable responsibility to recall our pressing needs worldwide.

I am aware that most of UNHCR's funding comes from a limited number of donors. My funding strategy will be two-fold: maintaining an open and fluid discussion with our traditional donors to strengthen partnerships with them and approaching "non-traditional" donors to continue broadening our funding base. I look forward to discussing this and other issues of mutual interest with you during my mission to Washington next week.

I warmly welcome the donor-led Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative as an effort to respond to humanitarian needs. From my side, I will do the utmost to ensure that UNHCR can deliver its support as and when required, indeed in collaboration with all parties.

Allow me to close by reaffirming my personal commitment to the cause of refugees. I am honoured by the trust that the Secretary-General and you have placed in me, and I wish to

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assure you that you can count on my full commitment to this organization and to its great humanitarian cause.

Please accept, Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(handwritten) looking forward to our close cooperation).

Sincerely yours,

Antonio Guterres

12. (U) Mission will pouch the original letter under registry number 6131639
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